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 William Fisk

A

VINDICATION

OF THE

UNITARIANS,

Against a Late

Reverend Author

On the TRINITY.

ENTRANCE.

SIR,

I Dare not call you Adversary, indeed, I rather believe we may be Friends; for tho' there may be a mistake between us, yet I hope we both agree in a sincere love, and search for Truth; and in what we differ therefore, I shall rather seek to melt you with gentleness, than to subdue you with opposition.

Page 150. you tell us, *When we are ready, you hope to hear from us again:* and you see you have your desire; you seem to have a sincere good will to Truth your

self, and therefore you will be the less surpriz'd to see it in others; for when you have given so *bold* a Challenge to all Unitarians, you must expect, that we have but little respect for the Honour, and Glory of God, if we do not answer you.

'Tis true, I come to *dispute* you, and am no Socinian, and as an Arrian my Hypothesis distorts your Argument a little; but as we are both joynd in one Common Cause, and you *attempt to deface* the Truth of both, so you must think, we expect you provide your self to give us both satisfactions, for tho' you conquer either of us, your Work's but half done.

You must excuse me therefore, if I mind

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not your Socinian Quarrels, but leaving them to themselves, divert your Argument a little, and bring in a third Hypothesis; you shall see I will deal fairly with you, state the Matter truly, and proceed sincerely, and clearly; whether you shall think your self obliged to Reply to me, or not, upon it, is not my care, if I can but rescue the Honour of God, and his Unity by it, I am satisfied.

M E T H O D.

It cannot be expected therefore, but that I have alter'd your Method, but yet you shall see withal, that I have justly collected all your scattered Reasons together, and dealt faithfully with you; and tho' the change of the Hypothesis necessitated this, yet in lieu of it, I shall present you with a Method both shorter and clearer, to recompence it.

'Tis plain, large Volumes destroy the Edge of Reasoning, and the Vigour of Sense is lost in the multitude of Words; I have chosen therefore, rather to be short and sinewy, than tedious and loose, if the Foundation Reasoning be bad, Corollaries fall of course; and therefore my chief care shall be, whether your leading and ground-work Principles be strong, and to the purpose, or not.

I thank God, I do not see my Cause so weak, as to fly to Colours, or that I should use undue Arts for a shelter; and therefore if I have omitted any thing material, I protest before the *Almighty*, it has not been wilful; and if I have any where reprov'd you, as *God is my witness*, 't has been where Truth has necessitated and forc'd me; and if I have wrong'd you, I as heartily beg your Pardon.

In short, I have endeavour'd with the most serious Respect, and the greatest Chri-

stian Charity and Meekness, to shew you where you have err'd: Indeed, I have not spar'd to advise and reprove you where I ought; but if I have run that liberty into an extream, or been faulty in any thing, 't has been my frailty, and not my guilt.

All that I know farther to add in this place, is, That perhaps you may wonder how I came to answer you so soon; but not to offend you, Sir, the Reason is obvious, though Fallacies are difficult, and to be studied, yet Truth is natural, and they are easily answer'd.

A D V I C E.

1. Boasting.

But before I proceed further, I see a necessity, Sir, to advise you of two Faults, Boasting and Uncharitableness; not that I can blame you over-much neither, nor may be acquit myself of their guilts, but I see a necessity to level these two Mountains in you, least by the Ignorant, these Fortresses of Imagination may be taken for those of Reality.

First for Boasting: In your Preface, Sir, you say, *You have said too much for us to answer*: And it may be so; but if you have not, we shall seek for Truth, and not to compare our selves with you. So p. 69, you call *our Reason Carnal*: And pag. 73, you tell us, *We puzzle and confound our selves with gross and corporeal Ideas of Essence and Substance*: when indeed, if such upbraiding Expressions were allowable, we might more justly reflect them upon the Eternal Generation you pretend to.

So you conclude your Book, pag. 271. you say, *It looks like a Judgment upon us, that while we talk of nothing less than the severest Reason, we impose upon our selves, or hope to impose upon the World, by the*
most.

most childish Sophistry and Nonsense ; and so pag. 272, your last words are, You will not envy us the Satisfaction of such Harangues, they being, you say, all the Comfort we have ; but you are pretty confident we shall never be able to reason to any purpose in this Cause again. And what, Sir, is not this Insolence ?

Pray, Sir, what is it you mean by these Triumphs ? Is it that you think to storm and brave us out of our Cause ; or that you are sure you only are in the right ? or that if you had the worst Cause, you could defend it well ? Sir, my Charity shall speak the best for you, that you are sure you only are in the right ; but if you are, has not Modesty more Charms to recommend you by, than Insolence.—

Excuse me, Sir, I dislike not your Zeal, in your Preface, to stick to your Faith, I rather wish it more common ; for were it, Truth had scarce been such a Stranger among us ; nor do I question your Ingenuity, and in Charity I hope you are sincere too ; but these are Expressions that your Zeal has beguild you to, that want a Christian Modesty, and tho' such a Confidence with a little more Humanity, might become an Apostle, yet how well they do a meaner Christian, I leave to your self to judge, in cooler thoughts.

2. Uncharitableness.

The second thing I have to charge you with, is Uncharitableness, that because we differ in Judgment from you, in this Speculation, you not only treat us like Dogs, and deny us all hopes of Salvation, but withal you manage your Arguments for Truth accordingly, and give us not so much as free Reasoning.

Thus you not only abound with Reflections on us, as in your Preface you say of

us, *We are eminent for nothing but Blasphemy and Nonsense : And pag. 9. you retlect, It becomes the Wit and Understanding of an Heretick : But pag. 24, you write more freely of us, and tell us, You hope the Disputes of Hereticks against the Catholick Faith, shall not be be called Controversies in the Churches of God.*

Now, if thus in the very beginning of your Book, you shew we ought to be condemn'd before we are heard, to what purpose does your Infallibility hold a Controversie with us ; but I hope this is before you are aware ; indeed in a Papist these Expressions might be natural enough, but Protestants methinks should be more ingenious, than to take Errours and Heresies for granted.

Consider, Sir, Churches have err'd, and — may err, yea, in Matters of Faith too ; if so, who is to be blam'd, he that by Reasoning seeks for Liberty, or he that unjustly with-holds it thro' Imposition ? Did we seek to impose our Hypothesis's on the World, we were as much to be blam'd as you ; but if we only set up ours, to confute the Uncharitableness of yours, wherein do we trespass ?

You say, we are Hereticks, and have no Understanding : And whence come you to judge thus freely of us, and not we of you : So you say, we blaspheme ; but pray is not your Charge precarious, and if retorted, falls it not as heavy on your self ? If we err, indeed, we blaspheme the Son, and Holy Ghost ; which we hope we do not ; but if you err, do not you both blaspheme and commit Idolatry, in worshipping them as coequal to the Father ?

But, Sir, we desire to have a Charity for your Misconstructions, and will give it you where possible, if so pray at least return our love, you see we stoop to make the first offer ; charge us not therefore, that we are only eminent for Blasphemy and

Nonfence, for surely you may add in the other scale, that we have a courageable good will to Truth, are some of us perverse, or do some of us revile; and what, are such Men wanting quite on your side?

tho' we have eyes we shall not be able to see, nor were we Turks should we be capable of being converted; indeed, when we are bewitch'd to the fury of a prepossession'd Zeal, will not all Men say, we rather baffle, than love, or search for Truth when we argue?

REFLECTIONS.

If therefore you leave us but room to advise you, as much as the Great *Moses* left *Jethro*, let us beg you for Christ's sake to cut off all these Offences; remember 'tis not Generous, much less Christianly, to discountenance a weaker Brother: But what? you believe not me; yet at least believe my Truths; for surely Christ's own Argument will hold you.

Can you expect Peace in Christ's Church, whilst you thus allarum and startle Mens Consciences, by so great and grievous Impositions; Or what, do you expect Men should have no Conscience or Relentment for Truth? If you do not, do not fetter them thus; you know 'tis no Argument of Errour to be singular; nay, I am sure, you know very well, that Truth is rarely popular, but rather suppressed and stifled through Mens Lusts.

Let us learn therefore, to let Natural Religion lead our Revelation, else the Curse of the Holy Ghost will fall upon us, and

Excuse me, Sir, that I am thus free with you, which I should not have been, had it not been in Justice to my Cause; but I durst not let these prepossessions ensnare my Reader, and yet not that I think so heinously of you for them neither, for many that have wrote much worse than your self on the Subject, have been more confident; and I could wish myself, as well as you, out of harms way of Error; indeed, could I have had a fair Hearing without, I had been very easily otherwise satisfied.

PRECOGNITA.

I shall now only present you with a few Precognita, to state duly the true Idea of the Controversie, between the Trinitarians, and the Arrians, and I shall then proceed to a particular Answer; and I hope you shall see too, to your satisfaction, and without the least needless Cavil or Objection whatever.

The Trinitarian believes,

That there is One God, but that he Exists in Three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that these Three Persons are co-equal, and co-eternal, and by a Joynt Power created the Heavens and Earth, Men and Angels, and all things else, that any way exist.

They believe, this Trin-unity even now continues to Rule the World by a Joynt Providence; but that for Orders-sake, they have distributed their Dominions into several, and subordinate Personal Offices; thus they make the Father alone to personate the True God, the Son to become Incarnate, to redeem us to his Mercy, and the Holy Ghost under the Son, to assist us through Grace in his Trials.

The Arrian believes,

That there is but One God, and that he Exists but in One Person; that the Son and Holy Ghost are neither co-equal, nor co-eternal with him; that he first made the Son, and through him fram'd the Holy Ghost and Angels; that some of the Angels falling with Lucifer, He through the Son, and by the Holy Ghost fram'd this World, and Man within it.

They believe there is no co-equal Trinity to Rule the World through a Joint Providence; but that their Dominions are subordinate, and adequate to their Powers; thus that the Father alone is the True God, that the Son became Incarnate to satisfy God's Justice, to redeem his Creation, and to destroy the Devils Malice in Adam; that the Son has deputed the Holy Ghost, to assist us through his Grace in our Trials.

By this, Sir, I hope I have given you a fair Breviate of the two Hypothesis's, I shall only beg your Patience, whilst I add two or three Principles to illustrate the Controversie, and then after a few Reflections on them, I shall desist my Precognita, and proceed.

PRINCIPLES.

1. Nothing is more manifest, than that the Jews in the Idea of their First Commandment, conceiv'd but One Person to be in their One God.

2. Could the Jews, or *Judas* have charg'd Christ, with pretending himself to be the Supream God, which the Gospel tells us the False Witnesses principally labour'd after, they would not only have

made their Acclamation, *We have no King but Caesar*; and their Inscription on his Cross, *Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews*, John 19. but they would have added, No God, no False God, too.

3. Lastly, 'Twas near 300 Years after Christ, e're Tradition and Scripture-Interpretation were so much as urg'd to explain and bring forth a Trinity.

My Reflections upon these Principles, shall be only Two, and they are as follows:

First, That the Doctrine of the Trinity has alter'd the first and greatest Commandment, as it were, by chance; and whereas the Goodness of God in such a Case, would certainly allow us a solemn Repeal; the *Athanasian Creed* is so far from

from such Mercy, that it makes this very catch pœnal of Salvation; and that very Trinity, that without doubt received their Honour jointly before, can now be admitted on no pretence, to receive it otherwise than severally.

Secondly, You see hereby, this Great Mystery is not purposely requir'd, but accidentally enforc'd; so that whether this inscrutable Mystery, and incomprehensible Hypothesis, be a Divine Truth or not, yet at least this is plain, the means of knowing it are Humane, and consequently the whole Mystery itself disputable, and left to the Understanding of Man to examine.

Now, whether the little grounds Men pretend to for the support of this Mystery, be sufficient or not, is what I have undertaken to disprove, in answer to you, by this following Treatise: And for my better Method, I shall distribute my Subject into Three Parts; to wit, The Proof of the Trinity, from, 1. Reason. 2. Scripture. And 3. Tradition. And herein I shall pursue your Method, and begin with Reason first.

R E A S O N.

K Now then Sir, to avoid all needless Arguments, I will grant you, that your Creed may in a Sence be rational, and very near agreeable to what you have wrote, in Sect. 2. thus I will agree with you, as you ingeniously alledge, pag. 49, and 68. *That Three Persons Self-conscious and Immaterial, may in a sence be called One*: Nay, and not improperly give the first Commandment as One, as being inseparably united in Will and Wisdom; indeed,

Sir, to do you right, what you have in this alledg'd, is the only thing that ever I saw like rational for the Trinity yet.

But then, as you say your self, *As by Natural Religion there can be but One God*, pag. 147. And *tho' there be several Persons, yet they cannot act apart, but always with One Energy*, pag. 136. So your own Argument destroys itself; for surely, where there are mean and under Offices between Persons, the Energy is manifestly not One, nor the Act simple.

Nor will your Arguments, pag. 118, help you, for 'tis manifest by the Descent of the Holy Ghost on Christ like a Dove, that the Three Divine Persons act separately, as well as think so; so that if your own Arguments be consistent, pag. 124, and *God be a pure and simple Act*; as you alledge, pag. 129, and 167, *And Alterity makes Duality*; as you likewise affirm, pag. 122, 'tis plain, these Three Persons cannot make up such a Deity as you would imagine; indeed they might be One in a Metaphor, and as in Scripture sence, but to be really One is a Jest.

But you will say, 'tis their Self-consciousness which makes them One, and that you apprehend consistent with this Personality: I answer, That is to run your self into as great Absurdities, to avoid the present; Is it rational Self-conscious, and absolute Coequals, should take or impose servile and underling Offices of each other? Besides, that the Son and Holy Ghost are conscious to the Father, is absolutely false, and groundless from Scripture, as I shall shew you in order.

St. Austin's Explication.

But I see, Sir, you are resolv'd not to be at a loss, you will rather have two Strings to your Bow, than fail of your Mark, and therefore now, we must prepare

pare our selves for St. *Austin's* Self-consciousness : And in this you say, *The Trinity are conscious to each other, as our Memory, Will, and Understanding are, which know and feel whatever is in each other,* v. pag. 50.

Alas, Sir, I wonder how that you who live in the fuller Rays of Humane Learning, can brook the comparing of Faculties to Persons, or how you can repeat such Inconsistencies as they produce, before you acknowledg'd each Person compleat, and rational ; and now you make *the Father impotent, and only a Speculation,* pag. 132. *and the reflex Wisdom, or the Son of God, only powerful to act and create :* And again, by another turn, pag. 169, you make *him impotent too.*

In short, Sir, I shall forbear to offend you, with all those Comments I could make in this place, did I rather study Malice than Truth ; but this you force me to declare, that if you take such liberty to prove your Mystery, as to make Persons Faculties, and Faculties Persons, as you do, 'tis impossible that any Reasoning should hold you ; For by the same liberty, what may you not say ? And what, Sir, do these Wiles look as from God ?

And that the Reader may see, you have not treated of these Faculty-Gods by chance, pag. 135, you attribute the *Creation to them,* pag. 182, 183, you make *the Father to have no Mercy in himself ; indeed,* pag. 135, you would seem to palliate the matter, by saying, *The essential Character of the Holy Ghost, in the like case, is Love.* But, Sir, a running Eye shews this to be all Mystery indeed, and really such an one as confounds Personality, Trinity, and Deity all at a stroke, v. pag. 130.

Besides, Sir, you make *Love in the Father to be the Holy Ghost, a Person, and God,* p. 133. And pray, Sir, why is not Hatred a Person in God, as well as Love ? The

Reason you give why Love is a Person, is because there can be no Accident in God ; and therefore even an Affection in him is real, and makes a Person : But what, Sir, may not this Reason serve for Hatred, and an hundred Affections more ?

REFLECTIONS.

I shall add no more at present concerning the Reason of the two Hypothesis's, because it will fall more naturally in our way, as we examine the Scriptures ; and indeed, I have wrote nothing at all here of the Arrian Hypothesis, because the Reasoning of it is so obvious, that it were to fire Candles to enlighten the Day, to illustrate it.

Give me leave therefore to advise you, Sir, that for the future you be wary to reason more perfectly, or not at all ; 'tis no light Truth that you have oppos'd ; and I believe many a Reader would have had less Charity for what you have done, than I have ; and may be would condemn you for beguiling with the appearance of Reasoning ; but I neither think so of you, nor believe otherwise, than that your Paternal Zeal has misguided you.

As for the Contradictions of this Doctrine, I shall speak of them in their proper place ; in the mean time, I shall pass on to Examine your Scripture-Interpretations : And by this time, I hope you are convinc'd, that you have jump'd out of the Frying-pan into the Fire, and instead of helping out an Absurdity by a Nicety, made it the more suspicious by defending it with a Fallacy.

Scripture-

Scripture-Interpretation.

BEfore I descend into Particulars, I shall write a little of the Interpretation of Scriptures in general ; and methinks here it grieves me to see, how to make out this Mystery, Men have not stopt at any Arts, to force and wrest the Scriptures to this imaginary Truth.

Page 153. you say, We ought not to force the Scriptures to preconceiv'd Notions : But what ? is not this Mystery such ? Surely, were a Pagan to read the Scriptures, the first Commandment would keep him so much as from ever dreaming of a Trinity ; and I wonder really how it came into Mens Minds : I know the World would be apt enough to embrace it, when it once comes their, as their Superstition has always inclin'd them to a Polytheism ; but I should have thought there had been a sufficient Guard, against every colour of it in Christianity.

But to maintain this Hypothesis, now once up, let me beseech you to consider your own evasive Constructions of Scripture ; I am perswaded, if you err, as I have said, 'tis because you have continued in your first Faith with too little circumspection ; and that the Socinian Hypothesis has not appear'd natural to you ; for you seem to have much sincerity, to do otherwise, and therefore I presume this liberty with you.

Of the SON.

Consider then, I say, is it not strange that you should make the Son, know things as God, and not know them as Man, *p.* 177, pray after what manner was the God head Incarnate, and what

kind of Person was this, that by a kind of Ventriloquy you make to speak something as Divine, when the ordinary Person knows nothing of them himself ? *p.* 270.

So, what an Answer you have there, that the Son was tempted as to his Manhood, but not as to his Godhead ; And pray then where was the Godhead all the while, like *Baal's* asleep ; or was the Man Christ now and then as it were possessed by Fits ? Methinks I am ashamed to handle the Absurdities of this Hypothesis, they make me giddy when I consider them.

So in the same Page, in Interpreting, *Mark* 13. 32. *But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no not the angels that are in heaven, neither the Son but the Father :* Do you not think you wrest and destroy the Scripture Sense, and in pretence of saying *St. Matthew* has not what *St. Mark* has, blemish the clearest Text ? You had better write down-right, *St. Mark's* Gospel is not true ; or that Gradation, Man, Angel, or Son is impertinent, and then you would answer something-like, as if you defended a Mystery.

But by the way, you must excuse me, Sir, if for Truth's-sake, I am forc'd thus to make such Reflections on your words which tho' they may seem hard, yet are necessary ; and yet not that they belong so much unto you, as your Cause, which I cannot otherwise set to a full light, which I believe you have hitherto embrac'd with too much inadvertency, and in following the corrupt Interpretations of the Church with too much Zeal : But to return to my purpose :

Nor will your Evasion of Self-consciousness, make God and Man One Person here, as you would insinuate, *pag.* 262. for 'tis plain, God and Man are thus two Persons, if they acted together, and God

commanded the Reason regularly, as the Reason does the Sense ; as you urge, pag. 268, 9. there might be some pretence for their being One Person, but you see plainly, the Godhead exerts itself may be now and then as it lists, nay, ever and anon, as it did at Christ's Crucifixion and Acclamation, left the Man by himself, and crying out upon the Godhead, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me.

And what ? Can here be any pretence then that the Godhead suffer'd ? For shame, leave the Blasphemy ; and for his being conscious to the Man Christ Jesus, that that should make him Incarnate, is such a *shuffle*, that you had as good say, God is personally united to us all, because he is conscious to all our thoughts ; as suppose a Personal Incarnation of God himself in Christ, on that account.

So that all that you alledge, of the Incomprehensibility of the Incarnation, will not save your Sores, for all that you urge of that kind, *pag. 264, is but gratis dictum*, and you ought to have more Truth in your Foundation, before you can justify such profound Mysteries in the Building.

Of the FATHER

So surely hereafter, Sir, you will be ashamed to see how groundlessly, you have made the Person of the Father, signify the whole Trinity, as you have done ; I am perswaded, if God should mercifully open your eyes, once to a Conviction, your own wrested Allegations will settle and fix you for ever from wavering.

What you say, *pag. 89, and 193. That the Son calls the Father the only true God, Quatenus fons Deitatis ; and that not in opposition to the Persons in Union with him, but the False Gods, pag. 185, 186. is so groundless, and withal so perverting a Construction of Scripture, and merely on*

the presumption of your Hypothesis, that I wonder how in fair Argument you can use it ; nay, and when in the very Text you cite, you have the Father called the only true God, in opposition to the Son himself.

Sir, Give me leave to tell you, your Church and Self have by Time and Industry, given your selves such Methods to blind your selves, like the ancient Astronomers, with so many Epicles, and blind and precarious Principles, in leading your interpreting Scriptures, that without singular Courage and Integrity lead you, I may say, the peculiar Grace of God do it, indeed 'tis almost impossible to shew you Truth, you are so clouded and maz'd from it, by your own corrupt Subtleties in defending Error.

But yet, why do I accuse you so far, you have already granted one half of what I desire, That *so many leading Terms, as Hypostasis, &c. are to be blam'd, pag. 139.* be pleas'd but to move one step further, clap Homonousios among them, which you confess is not in Scripture, *pag. 15,* and yield me, that our imposing Explanations must at least mud, if not corrupt the stream of Truth ; and you shall see after that, that you and I shall never disagree.

I shall add no more in this place, but to shew you, how deep you are dipt by your Zeal in this Error, that *pag. 150,* you can tell us, *We ought not to interpret Scriptures by Reason, the Reason you assign us is, because we must observe the Propriety of Words and Phrases, and the Scope of the Text : And what then, Sir, is not Reason to enquire and rule those ? You had as good say, she has no concern in Language ; And pray in what has she more ? But I shall forbear further Reflections.*

INCARNATION.

I have hitherto shewn you, how much you have err'd in your general Interpretation of Scripture, I shall now proceed to rectifie your Errors in particulars, wherein I shall be the larger, that I may comprehend the Objections of the late Dr. S---, and others, on my Subject : I shall begin first with the Incarnation.

Now that I may the better shew the Errors of the Incarnation, as in your Hypothesis, I shall state it, as it lies most natural in mine : Know then, that tho' I do not violently acknowledge the Son of God to be co-equal to the Father, yet I freely grant him to be as Great, and Eminent as God could possibly make him.

Sir, I do not imagine a *Prosopopeia Incarnate*, as you suggest, *p. 227.* nor do I make the Godhead carry about, and now and then possess a Body, as I have shewn your Trinity Hypothesis will necessitate ; but I suppose the great God and Angel, who under the Father fram'd all things, to satisfy God's Justice, and destroy the Malice of Satan, and to redeem his own, willingly condescended, that through the Power of God, his Being might be reduc'd as to a first Semen, and so he might live with Purity, and suffer under that Trial, that no Creature but himself could be able, besides, to accomplish with any certainty, for our Redemption.

This, Sir, I conceive, is the great Mystery of the Incarnation ; and this, methinks, carries some semblance of Rationality ; for if we from little Semens, may hereafter grow to the most considerable degrees of Glory, as the Scriptures assures us, surely there can be no impossibility, nor difficulty, that God should be able to reduce the most glorious of his Beings back again, and make them, as from the first

Seed of a Soul, arrive to their Ancient Glory.

But to this you say, *pag. 244.* *That there is no greater Nonsense in the World, than a Made-God, and a Creature-God :* Sir, the Proposition is bold, but you have not stoop'd to a proof of it ; however, I hope to shew you, 'tis neither Nonsense nor Absurd ; I must confess, a Creature God to be imagin'd the Supream, were absurd ; but when I say a Creature-God, I only mean a Spirit of an ubiquitary Presence, and multitudinary Power ; or one that by a perfect Self-consciousness, can reason with infinite Beings at once.

If then, Sir, you will not deny it to be in the Power of God to create such a Spirit, which I hope, Sir, you will not ; for I should be sorry to see my Words draw you to blaspheme the Power, which you can know no Limits of, but Vice, Error, and Weakness : if you'll grant me, I say, that God can make such a Power, I will add, he has ; for surely, to make such more glorious Beings, is much more for his Honour, than all little, single, and weak Individuals, as You and I are.

But you say, *pag. 159, 160.* *What shall a meer Man be exalted above Angels ?* Yes surely, if he were first above them, and laid aside his Being only for a time, and in obedience to his God : And what say you ? *Can any thing under infinite Wisdom Rule the World ?* Yes, Sir, God's most glorious Son, that is wiser than all Men and Angels besides, and that is in the Bosome of the Father, and so has his assistance, may rationally do it. And pray, Sir, where are the Absurdities and Contradictions of these things ?

Methinks, Sir, in this you should have been asham'd of your Reasoning : *You can allow God's begetting a Son co-equal Rational,* *pag. 221.* but 'tis with an horrour, that you detest an Angel-God : But pray, Sir,
if

if the Notion of God's begetting a Son be not carnal, tell me why he has not more Sons than One ? You dare not blaspheme him sure, to say he is not more fruitful ; or are you so niggardly, to think, he can multiply his Glorious Issue too fast.

But to return to my Subject : Hence it was, if you would know, *That the Son says he could do nothing of himself*, pag. 169. and hence it was, *That whilst Incarnate he had need of the help of the Holy Ghost* : but the Reasons that you have given in these things, are so shuffling, pag. 187, 270, that I blush to read them.

Platonicism objected.

So that all the Objections I know against this Hypothesis, is but, that 'tis the Platonick Philosophy made Christian ; and as to that, I shall only say this : Is Truth the worse, because *Plato* hapned to Idea it ; or is Christianity to be dis-esteem'd, because a Philosopher chanc'd to be in some of her Roads ?

But least any one should think, that the Doctrine of *Plato* should have the least influence, in wresting the Scriptures to this Hypothesis, I do hereby in the presence of God declare, what it was that first mov'd my Judgment, and turn'd me to be an *Arrian* ; and if it did me, it should move us in Charity to think it did others.

An Acquaintance of mine, speaking by chance of the Trinity, told me, Some thought it a breach of the first Commandment ; and to convince me, 'twas not reveal'd in the New Testament, shew'd me that most notable Chapter of the First of the *Hebrews* : Now he little thought what he had done, when he did this ; for tho' my Zeal boyl'd against his Blasphemy, as I thought it for a time, yet, when I reflect-ed again with myself, I thought at least, his Discourse had rais'd such Scruples in my

Mind, that the very Considerableness of the first Commandment would necessitate me to enquire of.

Now this was not only all the Discourse I had with him, but I remember to this day, that I could never understand by his Discourse, whether he were *Arrian* or *Socinian*, nor indeed what either Hypothesis was ; tho' lately, I must confess, I have perceiv'd him rather inclin'd to the *Soci-nians*.

But thus it was, that shortly after going for *London*, where my Doubt continuing upon me, I resolv'd to give myself satisfaction : I sought for Books, but found none ; indeed I did not know what to enquire for ; whereupon resolving to know that by myself, which I could not by others, without either knowing of *Arrianism*, *Socinianism*, or *Platonism*, I took this following course :

I took the New Testament, where I conceiv'd this Truth was to be found reveal'd, if any where, and reading it with attention, I collected every Text relating to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, into an Imperial Sheet of Paper ; for neither liking giddy Tradition, nor the tricks of wrestling single Texts, I thought that this could be the only way to find the Truth by, if any.

Now God is my witness, that when I did thus, I could not but fall into *Arrianism* ; not that I then knew what Name my Opinion had ; but some time after meeting with Books, I saw the difference of *Arrianism* and *Socinianism*, and found that I was not singular in my Sentiments, but that the World had thought the same before me.

Nor was this all, but before I knew that my Hypothesis had been known to the World, thinking that I was singular in the Truth, I resolv'd in Charity to Mankind to publish my discovery, till some Friends

hearing of it, advis'd me to consider first, that I might be as much blinded by my own Pride of Search, as the World was by their Corruption and Traditions.

Upon this resolving to be resign'd to Truth, and fearing lest my presumption might ruine me, I not only took all my Papers and burnt them, but resolv'd to read all Books for the Trinity, and converse all Persons, and if possible, satisfy myself to believe, and acquiesce in so great a Mystery.

But alas, Sir, after all this care, you see I am forc'd to differ from you ; so that tho' I could willingly lay by my Sentiments, the better to examine Truth for a-while, yet when on search I could still do no otherwise, than think my Old Opinion the best ; I durst not leave Truth for ever ; and I hope the necessity of my Case will at last induce you to a Charity for me.

Of Spirits, Gods, &c.

But that I may return from this digression, and the better evidence to you, that these *God-Angels* are no Novelties in Scripture, let me add hereto an Idea of the Nature of Spirits, as I have taken it even from the Scriptures themselves ; and thus there are Gods, 1 *Cor.* 8. 5, 6. 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. Potentates, Principalities, Rulers, and Dominions, *Col.* 1. 16. *Eph.* 6. 12--1. 20, 21. and Angels, &c.

God, signifies a Spirit of Universal Power, so that tho' there be but One Supreme God, the Father, yet he has constituted the Son and Holy Ghost, two Deputies (a) under him, calling the Son an Angel in this deputation, in the Old Testament (b).

(a) 1 *Cor.* 12. 4. 5. 6. *Rev.* 22. 12, 27. *Joh.* 16. 12, 13, 14, 15. (b) *Exod.* 23. 20, 21. *Eccl.* 5. 6. *Isai.* 63. 9.

And on this Foundation stand those Expressions, Let us make Man, &c.

(c) And thus, through the Son it is that we are said to have Access, by one Spirit to the Father (d) ; and thus it is, that the Holy Ghost, and Satan the *Evil God* (e), are in us like two contrary prompting and ruling powers (f).

(c) *Gen.* 1. 26. *Gen.* 3. 22. *Gen.* 11. 6, 7. (d) *Eph.* 2. 18. *Rev.* 1. 4, 5. (e) 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. *John* 14. 30. *Eph.* 2. 2. *Rev.* 12. 9. 20. 8. *Mat.* 25. 41. *J. h.* 8. 34. (f) 1 *John* 4. 6. 1 *Sam.* 18. 10. 1 *Cor.* 2. 12.

Thus it is, that the Son, as Governour under the Father of these two lesser Gods, administers the Gifts of the One, (g) and restrains the temptations of the other, (h) whilst they are in a perpetual War in us ; that is, all Mankind at once, (i) one helping us, the other tempting us, one comforting us, and the other accusing us, one having seven the Number of Perfection attributed to him, (k) as likewise has the other.

(g) *Rom.* 8. 26, 27. 1 *Cor.* 12. 3, 4, 5. *Joh.* 16. 13. (h) 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. (i) 1 *John* 4. 6. 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. *Joh.* 14. 26--8, 38--16. 7. *Zech.* 13. 2. *Nehem.* 9. 20. *Rev.* 2. 13--12. 9, 10--20. 23. 1 *Kim.* 22. 21, 22. *Rom.* 8. 26. *Mark* 4. 15. 2 *Tim.* 2. 26. (k) *Rev.* 5. 6--12. 3.

And thus you are to understand the Texts of a universal good Angel ; (l) and a universal evil one, (m) and tho' some have thought both Satan and the Holy Ghost rather Names of Orders of Spirits, than *God-Angels*, citing (n) for it ; yet 'tis plain by the whole course of Scripture, that those places more rationally ought to be understood, that those Gods have Principalities, and Angels, &c. which are sometimes employ'd by them in Offices under them.

(l) *Eccl.* 5. 6. *Psal.* 34. 7. *Isai.* 63. 9. *Mat.* 18. 20. *Eph.* 4. 10. (m) *Zech.* 13. 2. *Rev.* 12. 9. (n) *Rev.* 1. 4--3. 1--4. 5--5. 6. *Tobit* 12. 15. *Zech.* 3. 9--4. 10.

If you desire to see this Matter more amply argued, you must read Mr. *Bidell's* Twelve

Twelve Arguments of the Holy Ghost, who when he had made the Holy Ghost so considerable as he did, I wonder how he could continue a Socinian longer ; for the Scriptures to plainly set the Son above the Holy Ghost, and tell us, That all Power is given to the Son both in Heaven and Earth, which he cannot possibly otherwise manage, that I admire he did not turn Arrian through-out.

But to return, this Order of God's Administration through the Son, and by the Holy Ghost, appears more plainly, when we consider, their *gradative* Stiles in Scripture, and the Apostles Creed ; thus the Father only is called God in our Creed, as only being so ; the Son called Lord, as he only really is so under him, 1 Cor. 8. 3, 6. and the Holy Ghost, or Spirit, only stiled Holy, in opposition to the Evil One.

And thus, the Divine Benefits we receive, as from the Father, are called Love and Operation, from the Son Grace and Administration ; but from the Holy Ghost and lesser Power, only Gift and Fellowship, 1 Cor. 12. 4, 5, 6. 2 Cor. 13. 14. and hence it was, that all Communication between the Father and Holy Ghost, being through the Son, *Prophecies* ceas'd while the Son was Incarnate.

Next unto these, as I have said, succeed Principalities, Powers, and Dominions : Now these, by their very Names shew themselves to be as lesser Deputies ; that is, as Governours of Provinces, and Kingdoms, *under the Gods of the World*, the Holy Ghost and Satan ; and for these and their Offices you may see, *Dan.* 10. 12, 13, 20, 21--12. 1. *Acts* 16. 9.

Lastly, As for Angels, I need say nothing of them, seeing their Names declare their Offices, and the Scriptures abound with Examples of their performing them ; thus an Angel came to the *Virgin Mary*, to *Cornelius*, and several others ; so that of

this enough : And if any thing remain, it must be to explain the reasonableness of there Hierarchy.

REFLECTIONS.

I say therefore, when we think to reason of Spirits, we must freely allow our selves an open and generous source of Thought ; for as the Air, and much more they are too fine for the gross Casements of our Eyes ; so if we design duly to examine their Nature, we must be able to walk without Sence a little, and not think to grope grossly after them, as if we would feel them.

First then, I lay it down as a Rule, That Spirits are Immortal, and have no need of any nourishment, nor do, nor need we doubt this, when we consider even how the Sun has subsisted, how his unwearied Rays impair him not, and how so many Thousand Years has not exhausted his Source of glowing Fuel.

2^d, To this I must add, that I cannot but believe, that like unto Clouds in the Air, they gradually subsist in each other, by the proportional Purity of each others Substances ; nor need this be strange to us, for this is evident, that God at least exists in all of them, and rules them as easily as they by his permission can us ; and if so, what hinders but that he may have Deputy-Gods to do the like under him.

Nor can it well be otherwise, than that they should rule one another thus, through their gradual Purity, and Inexistency ; for when we consider, that Devils are entirely wicked, and are not to be ruled otherwise than through a real force, there remains no doubt, but that as they are in subjection to one another, so it is through such a real force as this, that neither Art, nor Conspiracy can destroy.

But yet, after all this, methinks I hear
you

hear you object, that this is difficult to conceive, that any Creature should be of so extensive a Power; And yet why so? Does not the Sun do the same thing in the Sensible, and Vegetable World? And shall we think as general a power in a Spirit, that as easily pierce the thickest Bodies, as he does the Air, impossible; nay, or so much as difficult, in the rational World: But what? We know not how it is done, no more we know not how God, and our own Spirit exist within us.

To conclude, I shall only add, that this being once granted, there remains no difficulty to imagine, how all our Spiritual Actions are perform'd, and how we are tempted; thus only the Supreme God, and his Son, possibly may see our Thoughts, the lesser Gods, the Holy Ghost and Satan, may only have power of Imagery, and prompting us, while Potentates and Angels, may only have power to rule and converse us.

But of this enough, and I shall now proceed to handle those particular Texts, that you, and others have cited against us.

Particular T E X T S.

[John 1. 1.] Page 216, you tell us, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*: And what, Sir, can be more agreeable to an Hypothesis than this to ours? May I tell you more agreeable, than the Trinitarian, for here is no mention of a Union of these two, but that in the beginning of all Things there was a God, which we beheld as the Word on the Earth, that Existed with the Supreme God, that as his Instrument made all things, and that coming to his own to redeem them, they knew him not: And here, Sir, your Charges against the Socinians, not only vanish to Air, but turn against you, when us'd by the Arrians.

Now, that you may not take our Idea of the Son to be groundless, I shall give it you thus, from Scripture itself: He is the beginning of the Creation of God, (a) for Righteousness exalted to be God's Son, (b) and yet as so wholly dependant on the Father (c).

(a) Rev. 3. 14. Col. 1. 15. Eccles. 1. 4, 9---24. 9. (b) Heb. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 17. (c) John 5. 26. ---10. 29-14. 28.

So he is likewise made our Universal Lord and Ruler, (d) nay, even Lord of All, with express Eminence, (e) and Judge, (f) who before his Incarnation, was that Word, by whom God made the Worlds, and fram'd all Things, (g) whether visible or invisible, (h) but yet so as an Instrument only (i): Which Texts I must agree with you, Sir, I think the Socinians *wrongfully wrest* to a new Creature.

(d) 1 Cor. 15. 24, 25, 27, 28. Phil. 2. 11. Dan 7. 13, 14. Eph. 1. 17, 20, 21. 22, 23. (e) Acts 2. 36-10. 36. Phil. 2. 11. Luke 2. 11. John 13. 3, 13, 16-3. 35. Mat. 22. 43, 44. (f) John 5. 22. 30. Mat. 24. 30, 31. Mat. 16. 27. (g) John 1. Heb. 1. 2, 10-2. 10. Eph. 3. 9. 1 Cor. 8. 6. (h) Col. 1. 16, 17. (i) Eph. 3. 9. Heb. 1. 2, 10. 2 Cor. 8. 6-15. 27, 28.

Further, tho' the Son be often called God in Scripture, as (a); yet that can give us no ground to equal him to the Father, the Supreme God, because God is not only a Title, as I have said often, bestow'd on Creatures (b), but is particularly intended to the Son as such, as you may see (c), where he is only declared to be Lord by it, which is a Title inferior and subordinate to God.

(a) John 20. 28. Acts 20. 28. Rom 9. 5. (b) Exod. 7. 1-22. 28. 1 Psalm 97. 7. 2. Cor. 4. 4. (c) John 10. 35, 36. 1 Cor. 8. 5, 6.

[Prov. 8. 30.] Your next Text I shall speak to, is, Prov. 8. 30. Then I was by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him. And what, Sir, does this look,

look, as if there was a coequality to be represented? No, surely, the Text aggrandizes the Person of the Father too much; and when you consider it, I doubt not, but you will grant me so.

Nor need I give you other Answer here, since you know I grant Christ in his pre-existent state (*d*), to be a Spirit of a Universal Power (*e*), who laying aside his blessed State (*f*), was deputed into Incarnation (*g*), and rewarded for it (*h*), being made our Mediatour (*g*), the Lord of our Temple and Sabbath, and King and Spouse to the Universal Church (*i*).

(*d*) *J. hn* 17. 5, 24-13. 3. *Phil.* 2. 6, 7. *1 Cor.* 10. 4, 5, 9. *Luk.* 13. 34, 35. (*e*) *2 Cor.* 13. 5. *Mat.* 23. 37-23. 18.--18. 20. *Eph.* 4. 10. (*f*) *J. hn* 17. 3. *Heb.* 2. 7, 8, 9. 10. *Eph.* 4. 10. *J. hn* 6. 62. (*g*) *J. hn* 17. 3, 18. *Heb.* 5. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. (*h*) *Heb.* 12. 2. *Phil.* 2. 6. to 11. *Eph.* 1. 20, 21, 22, 23. *1 Pet.* 1, 2, 1. (*i*) *Mat.* 12. 6, 8. *Mark* 2. 28.

[*Exod.* 23. 20.] Page 299. you say, That there are many Texts in the Old Testament, even by Christ and his Apostles, applied to himself, as then in being; and I grant it you, thus *Zech.* 12. 10. They shall look on me whom they have pierced, page 208, and in *Malachy*, Behold I will send my Messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me, page 235, answering to *Mat.* 3. 3. But what benefit will these Texts do you? Nothing really, but confound your Hypothesis.

'Tis true, Christ did appear in-being in the Old Testament, but as but an Angel, bearing the Name of God (*k*), once in Eminence called, The Angel of the Presence (*l*), and as he is sometimes called in the New Testament too, (*m*) *Who taking flesh upon him*, shew'd as much by the Agonies he was in (*n*).

(*k*) *Gen.* 16. 10--18. 1, 2, 21--19 1--48. 16. *Isai.* 6. 1. *Ezek.* 1. 26-28. 2. *Eid.* 2. 42, to 48. *Ecc.* 5. 6. *Num.* 29. 16. *Exod.* 23. 20, 21, 22. refer'd to *1 Cor.* 10. 4, 5, 9. (*l*) *Isai.* 63. 9. (*m*) *Heb.* 1. 7, 8, 9. *Rev.* 8. 3. (*n*) *Mat.* 26. 39--27. 46. *Luke* 22. 43.

But to pretend, that there could be the Union of two Rationals, a God and a Soul in a Body, to make a Person; or that the Godhead could possibly divest itself of Power and Knowledge, to possess the Body of an Infant; or that it was otherwise in Christ, who like others was a Child, and grew in Knowledge by degrees; are such Principles, that without Men lay by their Reason with their Religion beyond retrieve, I wonder they are not ashamed of.

Besides, even the satisfaction of Christ as God, seems irrational; What must we make our Creatour suffer for us, ere he can pardon us, and imaginarily manage the Machine of a humane Body, to atone to himself, and by himself? What looks more impertinent and absurd?

But that Christ the Lord of all Creatures, should atone their God for them, nothing seems more rational or just, if he design'd to satisfy God's Justice, to destroy the Works of the Devil in *Adam*, and bring us to Glory, *Heb.* 2. 9, 10. And upon this account it was, that for all Christ's Prayer, That if it were possible this Cup should pass from him: God's Justice would not let it, indeed he is too impartial even to spare his own Son.

[*Heb.* 1.] Next, I should speak of the Text, *Heb.* 1. quoted from *Psal.* 102. 25, 26, 27. and mention'd in your Book, page 200. How *Christ fram'd the World*, which you know I deny not, however, give me leave to tell you, that that Context utterly destroys your Hypothesis, tho' it does not mine; for how you will reconcile these words, *Being made so much better than the Angels*, v. 4. And *thou hast lov'd Righteousness, and hated Iniquity, and therefore God, even thy God, has anointed thee with the oyl of gladness above thy fellows*, viz. *Angels in the Context*, I know not; and yet you see Christ is called God, that it is mentioned

tioned in his highest degree, in the same Context, v. 8. 9.

So that I hope, Sir, if our Brother *Socius* cannot please you, as wresting too much the Scriptures in his Interpretations, as you complain, pag. 229, 230, yet the *Arrian* may give you satisfaction, and shew you there is an Hypothesis more apt, may I say, almost infinitely than the Trinity.

John 3. 16, Page 238, you tell us, *The Fundamental Mystery of Christianity is, that God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life*: And I agree with you, Sir, provided you will but take away your additional stretch of an Eternal Generation to the Words, and let the Scripture interpret them.

Now the ground upon which the Scriptures say Christ is called God's Son, you may see plainly, (a) and so for his Resurrection, which God accomplish'd for him, (b) But where is it we are to find, he is his Son through an Eternal Generation? Not surely because he is called God's Son; for that he was not, unless prophetically, before his Incarnation, nor only begotten, for that might be only as he was God's eminentest, and only peculiar Creature, indeed the Texts before-cited, take away all other Mystery from the Word whatever.

(a) *Adi* 13. 32, 33. *Heb.* 1. 4, &c. *Luk* 1. 35. *Rm.* 1. 4. 2 *Pe.* 1. 17. (b) *Adi* 2. 31, 32 - 13. 33, 35.

So, for his being without Sin in the Flesh, it might be, because, as I said, he was immediately God's Creation, whereas all things else were made by him, and through him, and consequently more imperfect; and for that cause too, he may properly be called his only begotten Son, and his express Image, as no one besides has, or is capable of managing an entire Deputation under him.

And upon this account indeed it was too, that he alone was able to bear the weight of the Prophecies, and Tryals incident to our Redemption; for if I may so say, not only the Tryals were too hazardous to be ventur'd at by an ordinary Angel, but no One, except the Great Lord of the Creation, would be like to shew so great a Love to it, in its Redemption. *Heb.* 2. 9, 10.

Besides, as God's Justice is most impartial, so even tho' the Son undertook the Office, he was not favour'd in it; thus when he became Incarnate, he had no Power of his own (a), nor was he called to his Office, till he had first sought to God with tears (b), and when he was too, he was often left to the sharpest Tryals alone, or else he could never have cry'd out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me*, when he was upon the Cross, as he did.

(a) *Mat.* 26. 53. *Jhn* 11. 41, 44. (b) *Heb.* 5. 7, 8.

Indeed, had he not then been wholly dependant on the Father (c), and directed by the Holy Ghost (d), and as so dependant on God's Grace (d), he had been no apt Pattern for us (e), as he is now, when subject to like Infirmities (f), and yet not but that I grant, that after he was once rais'd again from the Dead by God (g), after his Ascension he receiv'd his Power again. *Mat.* 28. 18.

(c) *Jhn.* 5. 10. to 30. *Heb.* 2. 4. *Mt.* 12. 18, 28. *Jhn* 3. 34. *Adi* 10. 38--2. 22, 31, 32--3. 15. *Luk* 3. 22--4. 18. *Jhn* 6. 57. 8. 28, 29--10. 29, 11. 42--12. 49, 50--14. 28. 2 *Cor.* 4. 14--13. 4. (d) *Mt.* 14. 22. (e) *Rm.* 8. 29. *Lk* 6. 12. *Jhn* 15. 9, 10. (f) *Mt.* 27. 46--26. 38, 39. *Lk* 22. 43. *Mark* 15. 34--14. 33, 36. (g) *Act.* 2. 24, 32--3. 15, 26--13. 32, 33.

Phil. 2. 6. Another Text you urge against us is, *That 'tis said of Christ, Phil.* 2. 6. *That he thought it not robbery to be equal to God*, v. pag. 240, 244. But whatever you surmize, this Text will do you but little benefit; for what is this, but to re-

require what I have granted, that Jesus Christ is absolute Lord to all the Glory of the Father ; and indeed, Sir, if you would have but look'd a little further, to v. 9. and 10, you would have seen the Apostle himself, apply this my Interpretation according to, 1 Cor. 15. 27, 28.

So pag. 239, you tell us, *He took upon him the form of a Servant.* And pag. 242. you say, *That that proves his Pre-existence:* And I grant it you : And what, Sir, is not this agreeable to my Hypothesis ? But you add, pag. 242, *That it was matter of free choice :* And have I not said the same ? Indeed, you have added, pag. 244, *That there is not greater Nonsense, than a Creature-God :* But, Sir, then you should have prov'd it.

John 2. 19. 21. Page 233, you tell us, *The Temple was a Type of Christ :* as you urge it more strongly, pag. 234, 235. And indeed, Sir, you are in the right ; but I hope you wield this Sword against the Socinians, and not the Arrians. So pag. 237, you tell us, of the *Types of Sacrifice ;* but in all these things we agree with you, Sir ; and our Cause ought to lose no Reputation, by your Imputations ; and therefore excuse me, if I put in thus a Caveat here and there, least another Reader, if not your self, may be misled by them.

John 10. 30. But now I am come to your great Charge, Sir ; *I and my Father are One :* And here you prepar'd your self before, with your Self-consciousness, p. 57. but as to that, I think, I have answer'd you sufficiently already ; so that I hope, even your self will judge, that the Text, John 17. 20, 21. alledg'd by you, p. 62, will be a sufficient Answer to you, for all your fine-spun Evasions, p. 61, 62, 63.

1 John 5. 7. The same Answer, I shall return you to the Text : There are Three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and those

Three are One : and indeed, Sir, without questioning the Authority of this place, what can we rationally mean by this Text ; unless One in bearing Record, according as, 1 Cor. 3. 8. and the Context directs ?

So pag. 51. you alledge, that because Christ said, *The Father is in me, and I in him,* that therefore they are essentially One ; as likewise, because Christ is said to be *in the Bosom of the Father :* But alas, Sir, your Inference is so weak, and these Expressions so much better suit my Hypothesis than yours, that they deserve not an Answer ; For pray, Sir, let me ask you, Who is to be cherish'd in the Bosom ? What, a Coequal ? And is not the other Expression adequate to both Hypothesis alike ?

So pag. 50, you say, *The Son perfectly knows the Father.* And pag. 59, you alledge a Scripture to prove it, which denies it, indeed, which shews you he knows but what the Father sees good to tell him : Besides, Sir, in this matter you have us'd such a shuffling Method of answering, as I shew'd you before, in treating about the Hour of Judgment, that Christ knows not something as Man, and yet all things on occasion as God, in the same Person, that really till your Hypothesis let you write better, you deserve no Answer.

John 2. 25. But as a strengthening to this, may be alledg'd, what you have wrote, pag. 245. that Christ tells us, *He knew what was in man :* And no doubt of it, Sir, he needed not that any Man should testify of Man ; but does this therefore argue, he had not this knowledge from the Father, by the Holy Ghost.

Besides, Sir, if you mean that in his pre-existent state he sees our Thoughts, as you seem to alledge, pag. 243, and 252, I answer you, I never denied it ; but if you think, he knew what was in Man whilst Incarnate, otherwise than by Revelation,

lation, I must confess you make me dissent from you ; for if he had, he could never have ask'd Men occasionally so many Questions as he did : as when he ask'd his Disciples, What *John* thought of him ? And what Men said of him ?

Mat. 28. 18. Page 247, you tell us, That *Christ* had all power both in heaven and earth given him : But I wonder you will cite a Text so much against you ; for if it was given him, was there not a time then, that he had it not ; that is, during his Incarnation, according to *John* 17. And if so, what good will all your little Arguments, *p.* 248, 250, and 251. do you.

You know, Sir, whatever the Socinians do, our Hypothesis supposes him eminently the Son of God (a), and the Universal Lord (b), nor do we deny him properly to be called a God, provided it be expressed as in the Scripture, in subordination to the Father, *Heb.* 1. 8, 9. for there in his highest Glory and Exaltation, he is always put under the Father (c).

(a) *John* 19. 7--20. 31. (b) *Acts* 2. 36--10. 36. (c) *1 Cor.* 13. 27, 28. *Rev.* 3. 22. *Phil.* 2. 11. *J. h.* 20. 17. *Eph.* 1. 17, 20, 21, 22.

Mat. 9. 6. But you say, *pag.* 249. That the son of man hath power on earth, to forgive sins : But what then ? That it was not his own Power, appears by his Answer to the Sons of *Zebbedee*, *Mat.* 20. 23. which he would not have given, had he been a Supream and Coequal God ; nay more, to confirm this, he declares he knows not the Hour of Judgment, *Mark* 13. 32. *1 Tim.* 6. 15. Indeed, after his Resurrection he tells us, The Father hath put all Times and Seasons in his own Power, *Acts* 1. 7. And tells us, That God gave him even the Revelations to shew unto his Servants, *Rev.* 1. 1.

John 5. 23. The last Text I shall write of in general of the Son, is, That all Men should honour the Son, as they honour the

Father : and this *p.* 173, you say, *Ought to be equal to the honour we pay the Father :* and I prettily observe, that you put off, that God appointed that Honour, on pretence, that 'tis natural for the Son to receive Honour by the Father.

So *pag.* 253, 254, 255, you are upon a continuation of the same Argument : But alas, how woodenly : No Reader can peruse you, and not see. *Page* 62, you can grant your self, that (as) signifies a likeness, and not always sameness in degree ; And if so, why cannot our Brother Socinian's Answer serve you ?

But however, that we may put this matter out of all doubt ; Pray, Sir, consider a little, is there no difference, between the great Son of God our Mediator, and every little Creature, and is not there a difference, between a Mediator appointed by God, and one set up merely by the whim of Man ? If these are not good Reasons, for our giving to Christ Honour as a Mediatour, I know not what are, I am sure they are better, than to make God stoop to such a petty Honour, as to be absurdly Mediator to himself.

But you have a further Argument, *pag.* 205, from *2 Phil.* 9. 10, 11. That at the Name of Jesus, every knee shall bow—and that every tongue shall confess, (But what ?) that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father. And who shall deny you this Honour ? Not I : no, I will grant it you in confusion to your own Hypothesis ; for 'tis such a Lord, and not a God, that I would have you think him to be.

Now, that we might the better understand what Honour is due to the Son ; the Scripture hath expressly called it, and appointed it to be Mediation (a), but yet not so as that we should pray to him for our Mediation, no more than we are to pray to him for any thing else.

(a) *Acts* 4. 10, 11, 12. *John* 14. 13. *Eph.* 3. 20, 21. *Phil.* 2. 9. *Rom.* 1. 8. 5, 11. *Col.* 3. 16, 17. *John* 16. 23, 26.

¶ Nor ought any other Worship to be paid him, unless personally present, and then as the only Son of God, and Lord of the World, he requires it, and such Worship is what is given him, *Heb.* 1. 6. where the following verses, 7, 8, 9. plainly shew it not to be intended of the Supreme Worship, but as is mentioned, *Rev.* 5. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. because God for his excellency and worthiness has appointed him that Honour.

Lastly, To account 2 *Cor.* 13. 14. for a Supreme Adoration, were to make *Gen.* 43. 16. so too; and as for the Worship of the Holy Ghost, as you your self can as good as confess, *pag.* 194, there is no mention made of it in the whole Scriptures: so that you may see on what a rotten Foundation your Faith stands; and indeed, were not the Truth I write for now, near as clear as the Sun at Noon, I should not be so zealous for it.

Mediatory Kingdom.

I proceed now to write of Christ's Mediatory Kingdom, and here I cannot but observe, how the Trinitarian Hypothesis distorts the whole frame of Truth; makes God a Mediator to himself, and a Coequal take as an Honour an underling Office, whereas Christ in the Arrian Idea, as the great Son of God, is fit to be our Mediator between God and his Handiwork, and may be deservedly honour'd with the Title, that he alone can prevail with God for mercy for us.

And here I cannot but let you see, Sir, with what false colours you would magnify this Office, to make it rational for a Coequal to accept of it; thus, *pag.* 159, you make it nothing, That *God exalted him to it*: And so *pag.* 163, That he was forc'd *first to suffer for it*, and then receive it as a Gift; whereas indeed, if he

were a Coequal, it were both servile and degrading to him, even to accept it, tho' on any Terms, and tho' with a Reward.

So *pag.* 173. I cannot but admire, to see how you [glorious] out this Kingdom, how you would fain seem to make it command the Father; when alas, Sir, you know your self, all the Power of this Kingdom, is but an humble Intercession, *p.* 179. Indeed your Argument, *p.* 176, and 243. That *no One but a God can administer it*; is somewhat forcible against the Socinians, but can be of no force for you against the Arrians.

But why do I use more words, That all Power in Heaven and Earth were given him after his death, *Mat.* 28. 18. If a God coequal before, were Nonsense, and as a Creature-God, your self says he cannot exercise it; so that Prophecies should cease, as they did while he was Incarnate, *John* 7. 39-16. 7. 13, 14, 15. were absurd; otherwise, indeed, you might as justly frame a Mediatory Kingdom, to interpret that great Text of the Holy Ghost, *John* 16. 13, 14, 15, as build such a groundless one as this for Christ.

Of the Three Persons together.

Having premised thus much in general of the Son, and indeed on whom almost depends the whole hinge of the Controversie, I shall now proceed, to shew you how the whole Three Persons are treated, when they are named together in Scripture, that you may see even there our Hypothesis prevails also.

Know then, that in such places, the Father is represented as our God distinct and solely, the Son our Lord distinct and wholly, and the Holy Ghost only as our aiding Spirit or Comforter, *Eph.* 4. 4, 5, 6. 1 *Cor.* 8. 5, 6. So in the *Revelations* likewise, St. *John* makes the Son and Holy

Ghost, but as Attendants on the Throne of the Father, *Rev.* 5. 7. 8, 9, &c. whilst he only sits on the Throne; and the greatest Honour even of the Son is, that he has redeem'd us, and so is become worthy to open the Book.

But yet as I have formerly shewn you, as the Father impowers the Holy Ghost through the Son, in all Acts of Grace, so are their Records One, 1 *John* 5. 7. And yet not but that this Record receives a stile agreeable to the Excellency of the Person giving it, where 'tis distinguish'd, thus in the Father 'tis call'd Operation, the Son Administration, and in the Holy Ghost Gifts, 1 *Cor.* 12. 4, 5, 6. And the manner of Gift in the Father is called Love, in the Son Grace, and the Holy Ghost Fellowship, 2 *Cor.* 13. 14. *Rom.* 15. 16.

So likewise, as all Three being engaged in our Salvation, they are put in as Articles to our Apostles Creed, but yet with subordinate Titles, as God, Lord, and Holy, to shew their distinction, and inferiority; so that your Argument you see, Sir, that their being there, makes them Coequal and God, is very weak, *pag.* 197. for by the same Reason you might make every body, or the Catholick Church, God likewise.

Hence likewise, the ancient Doxology before it was alter'd, was, Glory be to the Father, through the Son, and by the Holy Ghost; (see *Sparks* on the Liturgy) which shew'd plainly their Subordination: Indeed since, upon the prevailing of the Doctrine of the Trinity, it has been alter'd: But with what Scripture-Authority? Now I hope you see plainly.

But I shall not dissent from you, that the Socinians absurdly baptize in the Name of the Holy Ghost, if there were none; and they do worse than those Disciples who never heard of him, for they acknowledged him when they did, which

these, even now, do not: But what, are not they our Brethren? And are we not bound to have a Charity for their Error? And who shall condemn them in it, that they are wilfully blind.

However, to return: This makes not but that we are baptiz'd in their Names as our Spiritual Governours, *Mat.* 28. 19. for so even the Scripture plainly expresses themselves, 1 *Cor.* 12. 13, 27--10.2. where we are told, That we are baptiz'd by one Spirit into one body, which is Christ; that is, into the Church, by his Minister, whereof he is the Head, to the Worship, Honour, and Glory of God: And what, Sir, will you interpret against Scripture?

And this consider'd, where stands any room for your Calumnies, *page* 27, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214. Is not the whole Foundation of your Argument rotten? Does Baptism shew Worship? And if not, how can it be an open and barefac'd Idolatry? What may not there be a Ceremony in it, to shew us, who under God, are our Spiritual Governour, as well as by Water to imitate the cleansing of Regeneration? If so, why may not my Construction of it, agreeable to Scripture-Interpretation, be as good as yours? I protest before God, did not my Hypothesis not only want Absurdity, but suit most rationally, yea most naturally to Truth and the Scriptures, I would sooner dye than adhere to it.

Lastly, Sir, to put your Union in your Hypothesis beyond all doubt, the Scriptures have plainly shewn us, that these Three Persons have various and distinct Intellectual Powers, *John* 16. 13, 14, 15, 16. *Mark* 13. 32. *John* 12. 49. And indeed, we might rationally have collected as much, from their being given and sent, did not our Mysteries quite shut our Eyes against Reason.

The FATHER

Nor do the Scriptures cited of the Son, and Three Persons, only agree to strengthen our Hypothesis, and destroy yours, but even those that relate to the Father and Holy Ghost likewise; I shall give you short Specimens of both, beginning with the first first, and then proceeding to the other, and after that, I shall conclude my Scripture-proofs in this, and proceed.

Know then, that the Scriptures plainly tell us, that the Father is the One (a), only true God (b), only Good (c), only wise (d), greater than the Son (e), only sitting on the Throne, the Son and Holy Ghost being as his Attendants (f), and his Name is, *I am* (g), in opposition to α and ω , the First and the Last, One signifying a pure and infinite Being, the other the first and great Creature, Rev. 3. 14.

(a) Exod 20. 2, 3. Deut. 6. 4. Mark 12. 29. to 34.
(b) John 8. 54. 1 Tim. 2. 5. 1 Cor. 8. 4, 5, 6. John 17. 3.
(c) Luke 18. 19. Mat. 19. 17. (d) Rom. 16. 27. 1 Tim. 1. 17. (e) John 14. 28-10. 29. (f) Rev. 4. 2-5, 6, 7. Esdr. 2. 42. u/g; 48. (g) Exod 3. 14.

Further the Scriptures shew us, it is not agreeable with a due reverence, that we should confound the Titles of the Father with others; thus Christ gives us a particular charge, to remember not only that there is but One God, but that we have but one Father, and one Master, Mat. 23. 8, 9. and St. Paul, 1 Cor. 8. 4, 5, 6. tells us, That in truth there is but One God, and One Lord; to wit, the Father, and his Son Christ Jesus, according to Phil. 2. 11.

So they say, the Father is the Supream Lord of all (h), and greater than the Son (i), and really his God too (k), and that he is

the Fountain of Grace (l), and only invisible (m), whereas the Son and Holy Ghost have been often seen, so he is only reveal'd by the Son (n).

(l) John 6. 44, 65. (m) John 1. 18. 1 Tim. 1. 17-5. 16. Acts 2. 2, 3. (n) John 1. 18-3. 35. Mat. 11. 27. Luke 10. 22.

But what need I repeat more of these proofs? The Scriptures are full of them, and were not Men blinded as they are, with the Epicles of their Two Natures in Christ, and Mediatory Offices, &c. whereby they beg the thing in dispute, and anticipate all Proofs, they would see the Sun is not clearer than the Proofs I have given them; hereafter, I believe, Men will admire at our blindness, as much as we do at the Papists now; but I see the Hand of God is upon us, we are cursed to it, and only Prayers can remove it.

Of the Holy Ghost.

I come now to speak of the Holy Ghost, to shew you how much in every Point your Hypothesis straggles, and how you dissent from Scripture, in every step you have made in your Mystery; while the *Arrian* answers it, may I say to the most exact Truth, and keeps a due mean between your coequal Gods, and the *Socinians* no less absurd meer Man, and power of God.

Know then, the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth (a), called so in opposition to Satan the lying Spirit, is a great God or Principality, and Christ's Universal Deputy (b), and as so the Giver of all good Gifts (c).

(a) John 14. 17-15. 26. 1 John 4. 6. (b) Acts 1. 2-2. 33. Luke 24. 49. 1 Cor. 12. 13. Eph. 4. 11. (c) 1 Cor. 12. Isa. 11. 2. Rom. 5. 5-15. 13. Acts 1. 8-20. 28. Luke 12. 12. 1 Cor. 2. 10, 12.

Yet

(h) 1 Cor. 3. 22, 23. (i) John 10. 19-14. 28-17. 24.
(k) Eph. 1. 11, 17. Rev. 3. 12. John 20. 17. 2 Cor. 11. 13.

Yet so, as he is subject to the Son, and receives his Authority from him (*d*), and thence, I believe it peremptory to blaspheme his Evidence (*e*), for to lie to him, is to lie to God (*f*), that is, through him, though he be but in reality an Angel, *Rev.* 2. 1. 2. 11. compar'd to *Acts* 22. 34. *Luke* 3. 21, 22. where he made the like Visions; and indeed Blasphemy against him otherwise were absurd; it should rather be against the Father and Son, especially the Father, as *Fons Deitatis*, and whom the Jews reverenc'd when they knew not the Holy Ghost.

(*d*) *John* 16. 12, 13, 14, 15-15. 26. *Rev.* 5. 6. *Mat.* 3. 11. *Mark* 2. 8. (*e*) *Mat.* 12. 31. *Mark* 3. 28. *Luke* 12. 10. (*f*) *Acts* 5. 3, 4.

Further, as God made the Son his Instrument in the Angelical Creation, so he sub-deputed the Holy Ghost in the Formation of Man (*g*), and of the Earth (*h*), and upon this account, the Spirit is called Eminenter, the Spirit of God; that is, the greatest next to God the Father, and the Lord Christ, and the most extraordinary Gift of God in his assistance (*i*).

(*g*) *Job* 33. 4. (*h*) *Gen.* 1. 2. *Job* 26. 3. *Psal.* 104. 30. (*i*) *Nehem.* 9. 20. *Rom.* 8. 26, 27.

But yet he is absolutely Christ's Deputy, and sent by the Son, from the Father (*k*), that till Christ went, he could not come (*l*), and yet 'tis he that under Christ bestows all variety of Spiritual Gifts (*m*), that dwells in us (*n*), that spake by the Prophets (*o*), that helps our Prayers (*p*), and indeed, that assists our ordinary Discourse (*q*), by his Grace, or holy anointing (*r*).

(*k*) *John* 14. 16, 17, 26-15. 26. *Eph.* 1. 13. (*l*) *John* 16. 7, 13, 14-7. 39-14. 12. (*m*) *1 Cor.* 12. (*n*) *1 Cor.* 6. 19. 2 *Cor.* 1. 22. (*o*) *Acts* 28. 25. *Luke* 2. 25, 26. (*p*) *Rom.* 8. 26, 27. *1 Thess.* 5. 19. (*q*) *Mark* 13. 11. *Luke* 12. 12. (*r*) *1 John* 2. 27.

But to shut up all, he is in no place of the whole Scripture, either directly called

God, or order'd to be worship'd; which last thing you are so modest as to grant, page 194, 195; so that upon the whole matter, to Idea him in coequality to the Father, as you see were so plain a violence to the Scripture, he not having so much Honour allow'd him, as even the Son has, that I declare, I admire it.

And by this time, I hope, Sir, you see plainly, that your reasoning about the Holy Ghost, page 179, 193. are meer shuffles, and that your Texts, *1 Cor.* 2. 10. quoted by you, page 53. That *the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God*: has no other fence, than that the Holy Ghost co-operating with our Spirit, reveals us the greatest knowledge we attain, and that is what agrees with the Context, and the Text you cite in the next Page; but if it does with your Hypothesis, I am mistaken.

As for your other Reasons, page 54, 55. and 64, 65. brought to prove the self-consciousness of the Father and Holy Ghost, they are as groundless as the rest of your Myltery, and therefore I shall only shew you I take notice of them; indeed, if the Holy Ghost knew all things thus of himself, what need the Son shew them him.

REFLECTION.

Sir, I hope by this time, I have given you as ample satisfaction in your Scripture-proof, as you can desire, you cannot but be so ingenious as to grant, that you have had all the advantages that a Succession of Commentators can give you; whereas, I, you see, for all that, can heap you up the whole course of Scripture against you, that have not so much as one Arrian Author to assist me.

I have already inform'd you, what turn'd me to be an Arrian, and now I shall add, that when I had once resolv'd

nothing should be dearer to me than Truth, and bethought me the Corruption even of Primitive Tradition, and saw a necessity of sticking wholly to the Scripture, the Sun was not clearer to me than the Doctrine which you call Heretical, and Arrianism.

And give me leave to tell you, tho' you have Popularity, and the Temporal Sword on your side, yet blaspheme it more, if you dare, if there be such a thing as blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, as we have Christ's word there is; to your peril be it, Sir: I tell you, 'tis to blaspheme the known Evidences of his Truth: and if these be such, I dare venture my Truths with the Sword of the Spirit, against all your carnal Weapons.

Remember, Sir, there is a Sin unto Death, we may not so much as pray for, 1 John 5. 16. and all our pretences and good Works will be of none effect, while we blaspheme the most great and sincere Truths of God; beware, Sir, of this great and fiery Tryal; I mean perversely to blaspheme God's Truths, especially when so considerable as this, this is that that will make the Tree good, and the Fruit good, and the Tree evil, or its Fruit evil; indeed, can you expect to be call'd or receiv'd as a Son, when you openly and maliciously proclaim'd your self a Rebel to the only and great means of Government of the Holy Ghost.

TRADITION.

HAVING now done with the two first Heads of my Discourse, the proof of the Trinity by Reason and Scripture, I proceed to the last, viz. Tradition, wherein would Men but be content to believe as they pray, I should be satisfied; for

that they do almost wholly to the Father; and wherein may I say, they give all their pretences to Tradition, the greatest Lye even the Cause is capable of bearing; but alas, the World is made too giddy by this Mystery, to bear such, or any other Reasoning.

I know, Sir, you are very confident that she is of your side, as you say, page 31. but your Proofs and Suggestions for it, are as few and inconsiderable as even I can wish for, pag. 40. Thus, you would fain wheedle us, that Men were Arrians, and not Arrians. And what, Sir, was it out of Charity that they forbore to call the Trinitarians Hereticks? If it was, 'twas a sign they were the better Christians for it, not that their Cause was the worse.

So you asperse the Great Council of *Arminium*, of 550 Bishops, of so seeming or wou'd-be an Imputation, pag. 43, that I am asham'd to see't: What, Sir, do you think they would have called the greatest Council that ever was, if they had design'd a tricking? Or are you resolv'd to trust more to the Council of *Nice*, because not so many? Methinks, Sir, you should think it enough at least, that your Tradition was disputable then, that you had such Numbers against you, and not repose in forging *Rome* for bleinishing Councils.

You tell us, Mr. *Bull* has answer'd this matter thoroughly, page 24. But I tell you Sir, I have perus'd him, and he has not; and were it worth my while, I would shew it you too: besides, Sir, would you expect a fair and strict Combat, after so many Years, while *Rome* has held the stakes? What wont you make us no allowances in your Thoughts? Not that we beg it neither: But is it generous, first to fetter a Man, and then challenge him? What shall I say? Is this the way to defend your Catholick Faith! That Faith which you say requires both Forehead, and Forgery to deny

deny it, *page 44*, when you should say to maintain it ?

REFLECTION.

Give me leave to advise you a little, Sir, if you are resolv'd to follow Tradition : Be not partial in it : Why should you act by halves ? you would be a good Papist, were you sincere, and follow'd it throughout : Or if as a Protestant you hate this course, why do you not pursue it more home, and to the root ?

Tradition was only of use till the Scriptures were deliver'd ; and indeed 'tis well if 'twas contain'd pure till then ; as we may most justly censure, by St. John's Advice to the Churches, in the *Revelations*. But to continue Tradition further, what is it, but like the Jews, to make the Law of God of none effect, by our Traditions.

You must excuse me therefore, if I think Tradition to be too much a Nose of Wax, to be alledg'd against Scripture ; especially such express apparent and self-evident Texts, as *Heb. 1.* and *John 16*, I shall therefore leave you to jangle out your quoted Inconsistencies, *page 107, 108, 113, 114, 119, 120, 121.* And tell you withal, such Variances are no Miracle in a Traditionary Mystery.

In short, Sir, if ever you design for Truth, you must learn a new bravery, to be able to dare to be singular, think you that Men that geld, suppress, and forge Books, are in the right, or they that persecute all that oppose them ? Surely, I hope, you think better, that these are the Engines of weaker Error ; and yet this is even the present Case ; and who dares even at this day, and in full Protestantcy, to write or speak freely ; He is sure of being suppressed, at best.

Damnatory Sentence.

But before I leave this Subject, there is another part of your Discourse that deserves to be consider'd ; and that is, your Damnatory Sentence, wherein I wish I could spare you ; but your love for your Mystery, has so inspir'd you, with such a furious and unchristian Zeal, that 'twould be an Offence to the World, should I leave it unanswer'd under so great a Name. Thus,

P. 22, you say, this Faith is necessary to Salvation : and *p. 23*. That no Jew, Turk or Pagan can be sav'd without it. And that, whether he has us'd reasonable diligence, or not : Or, whether it has been perplex'd with never so great Controversies. The same you add, *page 271*, only you add this merciful Apology, That Men may understand it, if they will.

And further, that I may give your Argument the greatest force, you add, *page 25*. That to say, Men can be sav'd by good Works alone, without Faith, is Popery : And *page 26*. That if Salvation were so common, Christianity were but a better Sect of Philosophy ; and there would be too great a scope for Infidelity, *page 23*.

A N S W E R.

Alas, Sir, I pity you ; had you regard'd Natural Religion more, and your Mystery less, you would not have abounded with such an Envy and Monopoly of Salvation : What must we have no Faith, but be sav'd by Works, because we have not just this Mystery ? And what is it nothing to Christianity, that we have several degrees of Glory as an Encouragement, set in our prospect and search above the Heavens ? Or what, Sir, is your Eye evil, because God is good ? Would you have God

a Devil, create Men meerly for Damnation ? Or would you have him damn them to support your Hypothesis ?

See how your Myſtery has miſſed you, Sir, that Men ſhould be ſav'd, only by parrotting over a few unintelligible words : I might have expected this from ſome ignorant Sectariſt, but I never thought a ſkilful Doctor, ſhould make God ſo hard a Task-maſter, as to require Men to believe ſo penally, what 'tis plain, not One in a Million underſtands : Alas, Sir ! you miſtake the Redemption of Chriſt ! 'twas to purchaſe us a new Covenant, and not only teach us a new Faith !

On *Adam's* Fall we chang'd our State, our Tryal by a ſingle Precept for the Law of Nature, but had not the Seed of the Woman begun even then to have broke the Serpent's Head, at leaſt through a Covenant to be fulfill'd : Can you blaſpheme God, ſo as to ſay, he would let him be fruitful ? Will not a Prophet be able to vindicate his Juſtice, that has declar'd long ſince, every Man, and he alone ſhould bear his own iniquity.

I ſay, then Chriſt has purchaſed us a new Covenant, and ſince he is come, there is ſome reaſon for us to honour him, with the neceſſity of our Faith through him, to lead us to Salvation, and to obey his excellent Precepts, to conduct us through the Second Covenant, the Law of Nature, to Perfection ; But where could be the neceſſity of this before ?

I ſee, Sir, your Virtues have no Extreame, you have Faith, but allow no Credulity ; if you did, you could never ſwallow theſe things ; you confirm the old Sentence, *Credo quia impoſſibile eſt* : But alas, Sir, do you think to make your Doctrine prevail by theſe means, by a dead anathematizing implicate Faith, fitter for Paganism than Chriſtianity.

No, your uncharitableneſs cannot but

blemish you, even among your own Friends ; indeed the Predeſtinarian does not exceed this ; and may be, Men ſeeing thus, how one Errour leads you into another ſo black, will be brought by it to ſee the Truth they conſider'd not before.

Befides, Sir, had you conſulted Scripture in this, the Apoſtle tells you plainly, that Chriſt died for the Sins of the whole World, *1 John 2. 1, 2.* And if not, think you God's Mercy would have detain'd him till the latter Ages of the World ; beſides, Sir, are we not charg'd not to judge them that are without, and are we not told, that where there is no Law, there is no Sin, *John 9. 41. James 4. 17.* and that they that have not been able to receive a Law, or Revelation, are to be tried by Natural Religion, and their Conſcience, as a Law within themſelves, *Rom. cap. 1. & 2. Acts 24. 13.* And indeed, which is the Law improv'd by Chriſt himſelf, and which is written in our Heart, according to the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews*.

Alas, Sir, had you judg'd of the wilfully ignorant, and perverſe, you had left ſome colour for your Censure to be true, and yet even then, were I in your caſe, I ſhould be very unwilling to ſling the firſt Stone, eſpecially ſince Chriſt has told us, as we judge, we ſhall be judg'd ; I had rather let Men be guilty, and God condemn them, then condemn my ſelf by judging them.

Faith Neceſſary.

But methinks I hear you object to me, What Faith is neceſſary then, if this be not ? I ſay, the Faith of *Enoch, Abraham, and Moſes*, that God is a Rewarder of the juſt in tender Conſciences, is enough, and that without *Idolizing Works*, as you reflect, *page 25.* I add alſo, that a particular Faith of Mercy through Chriſt is neceſſary,

D

where

where offer'd with Conviction; but whatever you do or say, God will never require Consent, where he has not given Evidence enough; and what is it to me, if it can be had in a Cause, if I cannot come at it.

To these may be also added by consent the Apostles Creed, or any other, so it be not enforce'd; but for your nice and speculative Creeds, they are unnecessary, or else you accuse Christ and his Apostles, of a cowardly lukewarmness for omitting them, for all you insinuate, *page 29.* that we would be at Creed-making too, Sir; but we beg your Pardon, and have more Charity; for if we explain our Hypothesis, 'tis only to confute yours.

Consider therefore, Sir, by your own Reasoning, 'tis Popery, to judge of the *Catholick Church by its multitude*, *page 36.* So remember 'tis our heat magnifies our Zeal in this Hypothesis above others; for any other explain'd as nicely, would have as bad effects; and give me leave to retort your Argument: *Tho' I am modest, yet you have given me occasion to oppose you as Popular; and tho' I am cautious, yet Truth bids me not fear, whether your Mystery prove true, but warn you, that under Protection of a Mystery, you do not oppugn Truth, v. page 44.*

To conclude, in Charity I shall give you one Advice more; and that is, that you do not at every turn, like the Papists, Cap Hereticks, and repeat Catalogues of Heresies, as you are apt to do, *page 107.* You are a Protestant, Sir, and you should rather lament, that Church-Impositions so long took away an innocent liberty of Opinion from the World, and by an immoderate Self-love of impos'd Opinions and Disciplines, rent the Bond of Peace and Unity in sunder.

CONCLUSION.

I Hope, Sir, by this time you see, that we Unitarians do *understand what we write of*; for all what you charge us with, *p. 4.* Nay, and more, I'll add: We do it without mazing Metaphysics to help us; indeed, we have not your Breath of the Populace, to encourage us into large and fair Volumes; but I hope we have Truth, far better to recommend us to the sincere.

I hope, Sir, too, you see, we do not arrogate *infinite Knowledge*, as you asperse us, *page 5.* but vindicate a Truth, clear as the day: Indeed, 'tis plain, the First Commandment, except to exclude Persons is Nonsense; and who in this Case must bear the Reflection, you, or God; surely we must acquit God; and if we do, our Faith must fling you into all the Absurdities and Contradictions of Transubstantiation. The Case is not, whether in Idea there may not be Three self-conscious, co-equal Beings, but whether an Interpreter of the First Commandment can justify such a thing: and that I am sure he cannot, for all your struggles after Vindications, without Absurdity and Nonsense.

But you'll say, here is some colour for the Trinity: And what, is there not then as much for Transubstantiation? This is plain, our Bodies are not Two Years together the same, and tho' differing thus Twenty times in our Lives, we call it still the same Body: May not we on this, as justly solve Transubstantiation, that the Spirit of Christ is able to dwell in infinite Bodies at once; and will not this make as properly the same Body, as my Body at Twenty, is my Body at Thirty; but you answer, you have Scripture of your side; and pray shew me half so strong a Chapter for the Trinity, as *John the 6th* is for Transubstantiation.

Alas,

Alas, Sir, you see your Fallacies do but divert your Causes being expos'd for a time, till a nice Refutation makes 'em look the blacker for its Sophistry : And now you may see who 'tis, that brings down the plain Scriptures, to be wretted by the absurd Reason of a Mystery, *page 141.* And now Men and Angels may see, who are those *absurd and senseless Infidels, that reject what they have evidence for, v. page 6.* In short, I dare appeal to all the World, tho' against me, whether suppression of Books be not your best Argument.

You tell us, *page 148,* That *our Business is, to prove Three Persons Three Gods :* And we do it by this, That if God be more than One Person, when not particularly reveal'd, and contrary to his first Commandment, his Commandment is of no effect : But shall we grant that ? No, we'll turn the havock of the first Commandment justly, in Contradictions upon you ; we need not ask with *Nicodemus, How can these things be ? page 150.* but we'll tell you, with the same reason, we may make three thousand Gods, that you believe a Lye, *Theff. 2. 11.* And you had as good make all Mankind One Man, and destroy all Plurality and Numbers, &c. But for Peace-sake, I shall forbear further Reflections, *page 109.*

Hence, should you invent a thousand Metaphysick strains more, this one plain Truth would ruine them all ; indeed, did not Mystery, the Authority of the Whore, *Rev. 17.* and the great support of Popery, bear up your Hypothesis, her Epitaph might have been wrote, I doubt not, many hundred Years ago.

Mystery do I say, Mystery and Persecution are the Devil's Twins, and stand and fall both together ; Persecution without Mystery were too cruel, and Mystery without Blood too much Nonsense to be born ; 'tis these two are Popery, and the worst of Popery, Transubstantiation with-

out these were an innocent Error : And what, are not Protestants asham'd to wield the Sword of Antichrist ? Yes surely ; But if they are, why do they still us, and our Books, is it not that they fear our Truths ?

Are you not asham'd to rail at us for Blasphemers and Hereticks as you do, if I am not mistaken, we mean as sincerely, and Interpret the Scripture as well as you, for all your boasts, *pag. 141.* and you shall find, God in the Great Day will shew which is the Heretick : What, have we not as much reason to complain of the blemishes of the first and great Commandment, as you have ; and cannot the Controversie of *Elisha* and *Baal*, remember you, that 'tis not Numbers, but Minds that God seeks.

But you say, This is a Mystery : And pray who has authoris'd it for one ? You be-ly God in his Scriptures, if you say that he has ; no, 'tis Man's own invention, and that 'tis that makes him idolize the uncharitable Imposition so much : What, shall God bid us publish what none understand ? Pray who can agree in this Mystery ? Or were the Copy of it lost, who would be able exactly to hammer it out ? Is this clear like a heavenly Truth ?

Are we not asham'd to cast this stumbling-block in Christianity, that has so justly offended all Jews, Turks, and Pagans it ever came neer ; indeed, does not *Mahomet* support his division by this very thing, and does he not complain above an hundred times against the abuse of the Unity in his Alchoran ?

What shall I say, if we repent not this Error, shall we not justly stand branded to all Posterity, a Race of pretended Protestants, but really a Philosophick Sect of Christian Atheists : Besides, what but the corruption of this Unity in the God-head, can have so long prosper'd the *Mahometan* above the *Christian*, and the *Papists* above the *Protestants*.

I shall add no more at present, but that were this Mystery the greatest Truth, yet considering Mens weakness, 'twere both hateful and seditious, to impose it on one another, in pain of Salvation, to subscribe it only as an Article of Peace, in some cases might be tolerable, but to force their Consciences to they know not what themselves, is in plain terms Antichristian, Uncharitable, and Devilish.

And alas! now we see wherein our Reformation is imperfect, that it has not preserv'd our eternal liberty of Opinion, in things not expressly reveal'd, this is the Root of all Controversie, and this must be cur'd, if ever we hope for Peace; indeed, in a free Remonstrance, where all Impositions are cut off, Heresies of course pine and die with their Authors, for want of room to be regarded.

EXHORTATION.

And now, Sir, I shall more particularly address my stile to yourself: And in the first place I beg you to pardon all my Reprehensions, and if they are any where bitterer than they ought, reckon it my frailty, nor my injustice, and at least you ought to thank me for my good intention; but if you approve what I have wrote, return God the Glory for your information, and I am satisfied.

I assure you, Sir, in myself I am griev'd to write against a good Man; nor would I, but that my love to God and Truth commands me, nor do I write this, that I think you want either Piety or Ability, indeed you shine for both in your Church; but I would advise you, that you have mistook the Truth; nor wonder at it, for the greatest Fathers in the Church have done it before you.

You have ventur'd to be singular once in Conscience already, and your Treatise of Death shews you sincere; dare once a deeper Resignation, and a more singular Truth, if you fall not back, you know not what Service God may have for you to do. Remember, Sir, 'tis Constancy to follow Truth in all changes of Notions, and but obstinacy to remain stiff after conviction.

Besides, 'twill be as much your Glory as St. Austin's, that you recant; and if you are a Christian indeed, you cannot hate your Friend, or

Glass for shewing you your wrinkles, nor will your singularity be worse, if you see them; unless in Piety, that others are as bad, or worse than your self, and dare not see it.

What tho' I am singular and contemptible, my Truths if sincere are Divine, and St. Paul as well as you, had both 7 al and Popularity, and yet was in an Error; if you are in an Error, pray God open your eyes; and if I am, I beg him to grant me to be rectified by your Instruction; 'twill be hard if a Miracle be necessary to instruct and reconcile us.

I cannot perswade myself, that you will continue to pervert this grand Truth, and by Reflections and Niceties endeavour further to obscure and cloud it; what you have hitherto done, I hope, may believe you have done ignorantly, and because the Socinian Hypothesis was not sincere enough, you oppos'd it, but for the Arrian, I almost dare promise myself more Charity from you, if not Conviction.

At first I declin'd this Book, as not thinking it proper to be wrote by an Arrian, and as fearing least my own Resentments might soyl the Honour of God; and I had done it still, had not I had more than humane motives to the contrary; but whatever they were, they were to my self; and my Reader's business is to mind my Truths, and not my Pretences.

To conclude, if Men are sincere, I think I have wrote enough to convince them, and if perverse to condemn them; and Charity engages me no further: But alas! what avails it, if God will not vindicate his own Honour, the Attempts of his Servants are otherwise in vain; and yet at least I shall be content, tho' at any hazard, when I have done my Duty.

All Glory to who's only due, to the One and Only God, through his great and beloved Son Christ Jesus.

Whoever Answers this, is desir'd, to make his Answer short, that he run not the World into Labyrinths; and that he repeat the whole Body of the Discourse Verbatim, that he may not juggle the World out of Substance, by snarling at Trifles: These two Conditions answer'd, I shall think I have a Reply worth Reading; if not, I accuse it before-hand to the World for a Cheat, and a Deceit not worth taking Notice of.



